The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the similarities and differences between high school applications of positive behavior support (PBS) and primary school settings. An increased focus on the organizational impact of size and departmental structure is discussed. Connections between academic, behavioral, social, and academic supports are highlighted.

High school support has been framed under many unique labels, and the current emphasis on restructuring secondary schools has received considerable programmatic and monetary attention (Gates Foundation, 2003). Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers have been struggling to find new ways to address the needs of larger, highly departmentalized schools. Distinguishing promising practices with limited data from well-documented evidenced-based supports appears to become problematic as students get older and move into high school environments.

An area of increasing interest is the connection between comprehensive high school reform and three-tier models of prevention. By providing a comprehensive continuum of support for students, staff, and families, researchers hypothesize that prevention and data-based decision making may provide greater efficacy than reactionary and compulsory punitive polices (Fenning & Bohanon, 2006). One such model of prevention is PBS
(Carr et al., 2002). While evidence of PBS exists for elementary schools, efficacy data are limited for high schools (Bohanon et al., 2006; Bohanon, Eber, Flannery, & Fenning, 2007; Bohanon-Edmonson, Flannery, Eber, & Sugai, 2005). The purposes of this chapter are to (a) illustrate a rationale for PBS in secondary schools, (b) identify critical features of PBS as they are applied to typical school settings, (c) discuss possible adaptations of the basic model for secondary schools, (d) discuss preliminary findings for high school pilots, and (e) propose directions for future practice and research.

**RATIONALE FOR SCHOOLWIDE SUPPORTS**

According to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2003), full participation in society, socially and economically, is dependent on providing effective education for all citizens. Unfortunately, the efficacy of educational interventions for students at an early age decreases over time without continued support (Joint Center for Poverty Research, 2000). While high schools offer a wide range of programs for students, nearly one third of eight graders will not graduate from high school, particularly students from minority backgrounds (Gates Foundation, 2003). When students fail in school and as citizens, they do not simply leave behind a benign vacuum. A wake of events can be set in motion that can have a negative impact on society at large. Within the school, the level of violent behavior (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003) and of the number of students dropping out of school can increase (Kortering & Braziel, 1999; Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2004). Further, “low-performing high schools that produce most of the state’s high school dropouts, are the same high schools attended by most of the adolescents who have contact with the juvenile justice system” (National Governor’s Association, 2003, p. 16). Not surprisingly, these schools also produce most of the young adults who are unemployed (National Governor’s Association, 2003).

Termed the “school-to-prison pipeline” (Wald & Losen, 2003), high school age students who are caught in the web of removal for discipline issues have a high probability of entering the prison system and a low probability of returning to school. Further evidence for this link are findings that high school discipline data mirror those of prisons in terms of overrepresentation of students of color, particularly African American males (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000; Wald & Losen, 2003). High school PBS initiatives must address academic and behavioral components and student needs as part of the problem-solving process (Fenning, Theodos, Benner, Bohanon–Edmonson (2004).

Interdisciplinary, coordinated efforts may lead to just such an environment. As Glover (2005) found, coordinated schoolwide efforts may be related to an improvement in perceived positive interactions between secondary students and the school personnel who serve them. Unfortunately, evidence of wide adoption of these promising practices is sparse, leading to the premise that high schools have been considered the fundamental test